

## Kathleen Settle

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**From:** Benjamin Belhumeur <belhumeur14@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 13, 2024 3:01 PM  
**To:** Dale Martin  
**Subject:** City Park/playground improvements

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Mr Martin,

This is Benjamin Belhumeur, finally having the opportunity to send you some suggestions regarding potential upgrades to city parks, specifically the playgrounds therein.

Not being a professional engineer in the field of playground design, some of these suggestions, I understand, may not be feasible. I am, however, as I'd mentioned when we spoke, a father of six and have a fair bit of practical experience regarding the subject.

Below is a short list with the considerations I'd have voiced when the ad-hoc committee meets, along with explanations for each suggestion. I have organized them into what I would consider priorities, from highest to lowest.

Of course I am available to answer questions or provide clarification as needed.

### 1. Canvass Shades (example shown)



These shades provide a wide array of uses regarding the playgrounds. Shade keeps the children (and parents) cooler, allowing them to stay and utilize the park for longer periods of time, as opposed to leaving as a result of the sunlight and/or heat. Additionally, the shade keeps the equipment protected from the sunlight, equipment which can become unbearably hot and rendered useless to small children, and shade slows the aging/weathering/sun-bleaching of the equipment itself, increasing the amount of time before the next, we'll say, replenishment.

## 2. Benches inside any applicable fencing

Too often, with Wickline Park's playground being an example, are the seating/benches provided for parents and onlookers positioned outside the safety fencing around the playground's perimeter. This is a cause for concern for parents who may need to get to their children quickly, in the event of an emergency. Placing the benches inside the playground [proper] would better allow a parent/guardian to attend to the children as needed.

## 3. Rubberized ground flooring

Of all the surface materials regularly found at children's playgrounds, the "pour-in-place" rubber flooring, which can readily be described as a rubber mat, is the most preferred by parents and children alike. Adversely, tire chunks as well as wood mulch and pine straw, splinter the children when they trip and/or fall, and become a hot-bed for unwanted trash, glass, and, in some cases, even hypodermic needles. The general consensus is that this flooring is the most comfortable for the children, as well as the safest, some protecting children from falls of, up to, ten feet. Pour-in-place is also ADA compliant, easily repairable, and generally lasts in excess of ten years.

## 4. Dawn to dusk hours

Though not agreed to by all, the preference of many is that parks, specifically their playgrounds, be closed to patrons at dusk. Lighting the playgrounds specifically, attracts, not only children who would, as a result, usually be playing in a low-light setting, creating safety concerns, but also loiterers, who may leave behind trash, glass bottles and worse for the children to find the next day.

Thank you again for the consideration, and your willingness to bring this to the powers that be.

I Remain,

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